

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 AGR-05 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15

STR-04 CEA-01 L-03 H-02 /085 W
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R 230940Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 611

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 14670

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, US, RP

SUBJ: PHILIPPINE REACTION TO RAISE U.S. SUGAR DUTY (AND REPORT
IN RAISE OF COCONUT DUTY)

1. FORMER DFA ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
SERGION BARRERA (NOW HEAD OF POLICY PLANNING) EXPRESSED
STRONG CONCERN TO POL COUNS SEPTEMBER 23 ABOUT RECENTLY
ANNOUNCED HIKE IN US SUGAR DUTIES. BARERRA EXPRESSED HOPE
THAT MOVE WAS NOT "POLITICALLY MOTIVATED," APPEARING TO
IMPLY POSSIBLE U.S. EFFORT TO EXERT LEVERAGE ON THE GOP IN
OTHER AREAS, SUCH AS BASE NEGOTIATIONS. BARERRA EXPRESSED
HOPE THAT ACTION WOULD NOT IMPERIL LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS
FROM U.S. FIRMS TO BUY PHILIPPINE SUGAR. POL COUNS SAID
EMBASSY NOT YET FULLY AWARE OF FACTORS BEHIND DECISION.
HE ASSURED BARRERA THAT EMBASSY IS COGNIZANT OF THE
CONTINUING GREAT IMPORTANCE OF THE US SUGAR MARKET TO
PHILIPPINE ECONOMY.

2. AT ANOTHER POINT IN LUNCHEON MANUEL IGUAL OF THE
UNITED COCONUT ASSOCIATION OF PHILIPPINES APPROACHED TABLE
AND (NOT REALIZING THAT EMBASSY OFFICERS PRESENT) ASKED
BARRERA IF HE HAD HEARD ANYTHING FROM HIS "AMERICAN
FRIENDS" ABOUT A REPORTED 125 PERCENT RISE IN TARIFF ON COCO-
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NUT OIL (FROM 1C TO 2.25CENTS). EMBOFFS PLEADED IGNORANCE

BUT PROMISED TO CHECK THE REPORT (OR RUMOR) AND LET
BARRERA KNOW WHAT THE FACTS WERE.

3. COMMENT: WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE RE COCONUT OIL REPOR
T.
SULLIVAN

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Message Attributes

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